plant chemistry advanced step by step, it was attributed more concretely to a specific gas, a volatile alkaloid, and a volatile acid like formic acid. More recently still, bacteria have been accused of causing the affection. Experiments have seemed to verify these ideas in turn, but the falsity of all has at last been proved by the discovery of a more tangible compound. In January, 1895, Dr. Franz Pfaff, of Harvard University, announced that the poison is in reality a non-volatile oil. Numerous experiments have been performed with the purified oil, and it has been shown to produce exactly the same effect as the plant itself. Dr. Pfaff has called this substance 'toxicodendrol.' It is found in all parts of the plant, even in the wood after long drying. Like all oils, it is insoluble in water, and therefore cannot be washed from the skin with water alone. Alcohol dissolves it readily. Alkalies saponify it, and thus render it inert, but this result is more easily obtained by an alcoholic solution of the sugar of lead (lead acetate)."

The two chief points of interest to our readers are: the establishment of the fact that the poison is non-volatile and, therefore, that actual contact of the leaves with the skin is necessary to cause the poisoning; and, secondly, that a remedy has been found that is at once simple and efficacious. The writer, as the result of many trials, in which he experimented on himself and others, says that "applications of an alcoholic solution of the sugar of lead always give immediate and permanent relief." This is certainly to be regarded as a valuable discovery. Respecting the application of the remedy, the writer concludes as follows:—

"In practice it is not desirable to use strong alcohol, which is apt to be too irritating to a sensitive surface, but a weaker grade of from 50 to 75 per cent, should be preferred, and to this the powdered sugar of lead is to be added until no more will dissolve. The milky fluid should then be well rubbed into the